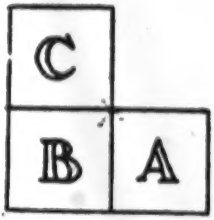
1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

frequently three gardens will be in process at one time. 244
One will be ready to harvest, another is being planted, and a third is being cleared of the dense bush. The following diagram illustrates one woman's gardens:



PLAN OF GARDENS

A is the old garden, where the daughter is pulling the ripe taro.
B is the new garden which she is planting.
C is the garden where her husband is clearing the ground.

The whole family is thus working at one time. The gardens penetrate farther and farther into the bush, although eventually after a sufficient period of time the planting is at the original places. Much pride is taken in the gardens, and whenever I visited them the women showed me around very proudly.

It has already been noted that the produce is the property [422]
of the person who plants it. The woman regards the taro as hers, and with it she feeds her family. Parents and children, when they are old enough, all work together in the gardens. At times a married woman will assist her mother, or two sisters or other close kin will help each other. A man is always expected to give assistance in the gardens of his relatives by marriage.

FISHING

Fishing is a purely masculine occupation. But while 226
every man fishes, some are known to be more skilled

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

226 than others, and every man does not own a fishing-net. In the hamlet of Penguli it is Tukan who has the best reputation as a fisherman, while Ongas, who admits his lack of skill, is noted for his adeptness in house-building.

The time of day for fishing varies and depends upon the tide. If the tide is low during the early morning, that is the time for fishing. But when the tide does not recede until night, the reef and jutting points of land are lighted with fires, and some of the fishermen carry burning faggots with them so that they may the better see to ensnare the fish.

Fishing is carried on in a variety of ways: By a large group with nets (*uben*)[1] and spears; the setting of traps (*andak*), and the use of baskets to remove the fish from the traps; with the special outfit used to catch sharks; by the methods peculiar to the catching of a sea-worm, *beta*, which comes once a year.

The commonest method is with the *uben* and spear (*rur*). The latter is a bamboo pole with a pronged end. The *uben* consists of two parts—two bamboo poles with nets stretched across them.

[789] Magic must be made over a new *uben*, but there is no magic connected with its use, after the initial magic has been made. No magic is made over the spear. Fishing with the *uben* and spear requires a group of men, and on a good fishing day most of the men of the village will be out in the sea on a joint fishing expedition. One such expedition consisted of thirty men. Eight men had *ubens* and the remainder had spears. It was the older or middle-aged men who had the *ubens*, while the younger ones had spears. (It is expensive to have an *uben* made.) Close to the little totemic land, Jenusa, off the coast of Lesu, the men stood in water up to

[1] *Uben* is a word for net from another dialect, but is used universally over the island. *Kek* is the word in the Lesu dialect.

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

their waists in circular formation. The position was about 226● like this:

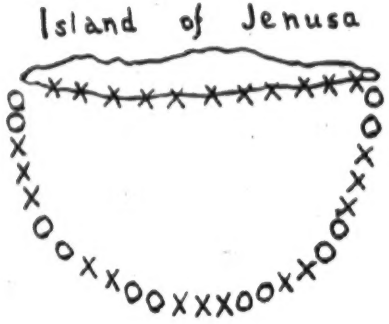


DIAGRAM OF MEN FISHING WITH NETS AND SPEARS OFF THE REEF

O—Men with *ubens* (nets)
X—Men with spears

The men with the *ubens* were in the water, while those with the spears were all on the beach of Jenusa, at the edge of the water. All stood quite still until fish were sighted, then Lungow cried out "*lärupke*" (plenty of little fish), and immediately all closed in on them. Sometimes the men with the spears shoved the fish into the nets; sometimes they caught them on the spears, and frequently the fish were caught with the *ubens* without being shoved in by spears. Whoever sees the fish first cries out. In addition to the call given above, "*lu äl*" or "*utsilé*" are used. These refer to different kinds of fish. A man usually keeps the fish he catches for himself,

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

226 his wife and children, sister, and wife's relations. However, if one man has a very small catch and another a big one, the latter gives the former some of his fish. If a feast is being held for any occasion, some of the fish, or sometimes all of them, are contributed to whoever is holding the feast. Frequently, if the weather and tide permit, fishing immediately precedes a feast.

Another fishing method is by means of a trap (*andak*), which is built in rather shallow water off the reef by piling up stones and coral. Crevices are left between the stones and coral through which the fish can swim, but once in they are not able to swim out. The trap is left for a month, and at the end of that time the men come with baskets and spears, remove the stones and coral, and catch the fish in the baskets as they swim out of the *andak*. Sometimes they are speared rather than caught in the baskets. Traps are made only by men, and no magic is said over them, or connected with this type of fishing. A man frequently makes two or three traps at once, and when the time comes to open them up, usually before a feast, five or six men will catch the fish as they come out, and the fish belong to all of them.

Occasionally fishing is done with line and hook. The line, fastened to a bamboo pole, is made from a vine, to which is attached a hook of tortoise-shell. A small crab is the bait. Magic is made over a new line. This kind of fishing was more frequent in the past than it is to-day, and now the line is one purchased from a trade store.

A sea-worm, called *beta*, which comes out of the sea once a year, is caught by special methods. The natives know about which moon it is to be expected, and what the condition of the tide should be for its arrival. On the occasion witnessed the *beta* appeared on September 20th, about 10 p.m. According to the natives this was a month earlier

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

than usual.[1] For a month before the appearance of the *beta* the children play a game called *tipuli*, which is almost the exact equivalent of our tug-of-war. The "rope" is a heavy vine from the bush, and the children at each end pull until one side gives way. A few nights before the *beta* is expected the adults also engage in this game, playing it a bit more seriously than the children, for whom it sometimes becomes a frolic. The natives say that the game symbolizes the pulling in of the *beta* from the sea.[2]

The *beta* was sighted by a young girl who, with other children, was on the reef that night looking for shell-fish. She cried out that the *beta* had come, and immediately there was much excitement. Everyone, men and women, rushed to the beach and out to the reef with their baskets, where they stayed for several hours gathering in the *beta*. When finally all the worms had been gathered in the baskets, everyone went to bed exhausted. But at daybreak they were up and bathing in the sea. They said that if they did not bathe in the sea after taking in the *beta*, their bodies would be marked with rings similar to those on the *beta*. On this occasion they should have bathed the night before, as soon as they finished getting in the *beta*, but they were too tired then, and had gone directly to bed, postponing the bathing until daybreak.[3]

The day following the catching of the *beta* was a busy one.

[1] The same marine annelid is found in other parts of the Pacific, particularly in the Samoan, Tongan, and Fijian groups. In Fiji it is called the *mbalolo*, and is found in October or November. These two months take their names from it, October being known as *Little Mbalolo*, and November as *Great Mbalolo*. Thompson, Basil, *The Fijians*, 1928. London, Wm. Heineman, pp. 324–327.

In a similar way at Lesu the names for certain months take their name from the *beta* (see p. 290).

[2] Because the *beta* appeared earlier than expected, the adults had not played the game of *tipuli*, and the children had only been playing it for four days.

[3] Ambwa, the next village, had no *beta*, for no one had sighted it. Having come a month earlier than expected, they had no look-out for it.

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

It had to be cooked and taro had to be prepared to be eaten with it. Late in the day the men carried the baked *beta* and taro to the cemetery, where they had a feast. The women ate the *beta* on the beach, or at home, wherever they happened to be, and not in any communal fashion. It was considered a great delicacy and much enjoyed. Its appearance, catching, cooking, and eating was a noteworthy occasion in the everyday life of the community.

Shark-fishing is set off from other fishing because magic is a very integral part of it, because it is surrounded by many sexual taboos, and because it is a dangerous undertaking. A man is supposed to be sexually continent for a month before he goes shark-fishing, and should his wife be pregnant he cannot go at all. Four or five men may go out on an expedition, but only one man, the leader of the expedition, makes the magic, which is supposed to be effective for all of them. If a man does not know the proper magic he will pay another who does know it to lead the expedition for him. The shark belongs to the leader, and the others are paid with *tsera* for their share in the enterprise.

The implements for catching the shark are a large rattle made of shells, a *kut*, which is a curved piece of wood with a loop of rope in the centre, through which the shark is held fast, and a thick stick made of hard wood, *gula*, used to knock it over the head. While essential, these are only a part of the equipment. It is magic which is used to inaugurate the expedition and in every succeeding stage.

Very early in the morning the man who knows the shark magic brings his canoe to that part of the beach where there are no houses, and there places it on the sand lengthwise, with the outrigger seaward. He then makes a little fire on the beach by the side of the canoe, passes the *bungla* leaf through the fire, and recites a spell as he moves the leaf slowly over the canoe.

This particular shark magic came from Medina, and

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

before that from Tabar, both different languages from Lesu. The spell itself is therefore in a very strange combination of all three languages, and as I knew but one of the languages I was only able to get a very free translation.

"Leaf, leaf, take away taboo" (repeated many times), followed by a muttered cry sounding like *kurkur kukukukuku*, which is supposed to be the shark saying that he cannot come because the man has eaten taboo food (i.e. food given to him by, or eaten in company with, a pregnant woman). Then, "Who has eaten the taboo food?" is supposed to be asked by the man. In answer he then calls out the names of little sharks (*kambilo*, *panduai*, *wasarasara*, *jaukabing*), who he says have eaten the taboo food. If these little sharks should come up, he will not catch them, but will wait for the big shark. When he has finished repeating the spell, he puts the leaf inside the canoe, which he covers with coconut leaves, and it remains like this all day. The spell and the rite are supposed to rid the man of the bad effect of having eaten with a pregnant woman, or having taken food from her, by transferring the act to the little sharks mentioned in the spell.

During the day his wife fills up the bamboo pole with drinking-water and places it in the canoe.

Late that afternoon the man takes a bunch of *tsil* leaves, dips their tips into the sea, bites off the tips, spits them out, and then, standing close to the canoe, strikes it with the leaves at intervals, saying:

Leaf, make many shark come up.
Many shark come. I go after them.
Shark, you come close to me.
Lauwemba (name of passage where shark is supposed to come),
I want to go close to you.
I go now, I come close to you (shark).

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

226 789 The spell is repeated several times, always mentioning the name of a different "passage." The *tsil* leaf is now put on the sand under the canoe.

The magician now goes home and eats his evening meal, prepared by his wife. He goes to bed soon after he has finished eating and gets up the next morning before sunrise. Previous to this he has taken to the bush a large stone (about twelve inches long, eight inches wide, and four inches high) which he has found in a "passage" of water. This is just an ordinary stone, covered with green seaweed when it is in the water, but after it has been taken to the bush and a spell said over it, it becomes invested with the spirit of the shark, *tanuan beii*, spirit shark.

The magician also takes with him into the bush a small shell called *Pitun*, which is found on the banks of a river, and not on the seashore. One side, called *lauat*, represents the head of a small shark, and the other, called *balum balum*, the head of a big shark. (But to my eye there was no difference in the sides of the shell.) In one hand he carries the shell, and in the other a piece of long grass or weed called *Pelis*, which he puts around his middle finger, and in the same hand he carries a *goragora* leaf. He comes to the stone, *tanuan beii*, in the bush, and crouching in front of it he blows and says the following spell:

catch catch shark
shark comes up sun comes up

kitsisitsitsit sit sit sitsitsitsi
a call made also when shark is sighted.

This spell is repeated four times.

Then he scrapes the stone with the shell and puts the dirt which falls off into the *goragora* leaf, folds the leaf over, and ties it with the weed *Pelis*. This dirt wrapped

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

inside the leaf is also supposed to be the shark's spirit, or *tanuan beii*.

Now he crouches again in front of the stone and puts both hands to his breast, one hand clasps the folded leaf and the other the shell; he rises slowly, sinks down again, and then sways slowly from side to side, still with bent knees, and says the following spell:

(suppose) I come up along passag
you (shark) come up
I am ready with rope you come up
I come up to the tree, you come up
(tree sticking up in water)
I come up to (name of big fish not shark)
you come up
I come up to sea bird, you come up
(suppose) sun comes up, you come up
(suppose) I come up to little trees
you come up

Then, still with his hands in the same position, he turns around and goes through a queer dancing step with bent legs.

The shell and the folded leaf are put in the canoe, and it is thought that the spirit shark, *tanuan beii*, is in the leaf, and thus accompanies him on the fishing trip.

Now he paddles out in the canoe. When he comes to the point of land jutting out to the sea he takes a previously prepared leaf and says a spell over it. The leaf is the *goragora* leaf, and inside of it is a *wula* leaf and a small stalk two or three inches long from a banana tree. The *wula* leaf represents the vagina and the banana stalk a penis, or rather they are supposed to be the spirit or *tanuan* of the vagina and penis, and these being wrapped together inside the leaf symbolize the act of copulation. The magician takes this small leaf bundle, says a spell

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

226 789 831 over it, dips it into the sea, passes it between his legs under his testicles, and then "drinks" it. After this he throws it away. The "drinking" is supposed to rid him of the bad effects of taking food from a pregnant woman or of having eaten with one.[1] The spell contains the wish that many fish come up.

226 789 Now the magician paddles for some time and prepares the rope of the *kut*, to catch a shark. He also takes with him in the canoe the red leaf, *bang*. He dives from the canoe into the water and washes himself, to take away any dirt, and then, standing up in the water and holding on to the canoe with one hand, and with the leaf *bang* in the other, he recites the following spell:

Leaf (make shark) die
leaf (shark) you come up
leaf send shark
(this addressed to the spirit shark).

Then he throws the leaf into the sea and gets back into the canoe. Now he continues paddling. A shark is seen and the man gives the call *tsitsitsi*, then takes a dead fish fastened on a bamboo rod (a fish caught the day before and taken with him in the canoe) and puts the line with the fish on the end through the loop of the rope of the *kut*. He calls out "lauat," the name of the small head of the shark on the shell, but the shark does not rise to the bait and remains uncaught for the present. Then the man takes the *tsil* leaf which he has put into the canoe, dives overboard again and washes

[1] Note that most of the magic connected with shark-fishing is designed to get rid of the bad effect of eating with pregnant women or accepting food from them. I asked the magician why he eats with them, or takes food from them. He replied that it could not be helped. In casually strolling about the village one gives him a betel-nut, another a baked taro, etc. The magic is not supposed to make this food come out as faeces, but to remove the bad effect.

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

himself, stands up and says a spell with the *tsil* leaf in his hand. The spell contains the same idea that he must rid himself of the bad effect of having eaten with pregnant women, and his washing is a rite to attain this end.

Now he gets back into the canoe and paddles on. Again he tries to catch the shark with the dead fish as a bait, and this time he succeeds. The shark comes through the loop, which the man pulls tightly, then he knocks the fish on the head with the *gula*, or thick stick. The shark is now dead. The man paddles back, and landing on the beach blows his conch shell to announce that he has returned with the shark. Later, it is wrapped in leaves and baked in the *liga*, and then there is a feast, as usual, in the cemetery. The shark is considered very choice food.[1]

COOKING

Cooking is an occupation of prime importance, and considered as such by the community. Although the men participate in several tasks connected with it, and although they prepare certain foods, it is essentially the women's work. It is usually done communally, and always so before ritual events, such as birth, initiation, marriage, death feasts, and the numerous minor ritual feasts. The group may range from ten to two hundred women, perhaps those of one or two hamlets, or all the women of several villages. Besides the communal cooking before ritual feasts, there is also the frequent communal cooking by the women of a hamlet, or sometimes two neighbouring ones. This is the normal way

[1] Shark-fishing is not being practised at present in the district where I lived. Farther up the coast shark-fishing expeditions are still being held, but I was unable to get there. The above account was given to me by the man who was known as the magician for shark-fishing and who had formerly led expeditions from Lesu. It was supplemented and checked with other accounts.

3:Chinnery G, E-5 (1929)1931 OM10 New Ireland O

423 Portion Nosi—Belonging to clan Balus, sub-group, Lamis. Principal man, Arkai of Madina and later of Laraibin, who will receive the purchase money and
432 distribute it according to custom.

614 Portion Porokalaman—Belonging to clan Babanga, sub-group, Savinu. Principal man, Lamani of Madina, who will receive the purchase money and distribute it in accordance with custom. In this case the Luluai of Luaupul and Arakai of Madina are entitled to a share as compensation for gifts of ground made by the original owners to their ancestors and parents, the Luluai of Luaupul being the son of the sister of Lombu, the last owner of the ground. Lombu, before he died, permitted the father of Arakai to plant and use part of the ground.

Portion Seladara—Belonging to Munungak clan. Principal man, Kauavek of Madina, who will distribute it among the people entitled. In this case, two women of Lugagun share in the purchase money.

Portion Lemagaf—Belonging to clan Arigaum. Names of principal men not given.

Portion Naberabera—Belonging to clan Balus. Names of principal men not given.

The last two portions belong to people of Luaupul, who were not present at the inquiry, and regarding whose ownership the people of Madina were unable to give me particulars.

142 Physically the people of the East coast are of medium height and robust build. They are woolly-haired and brown-eyed; the skin colour varies from light to dark brown, many being almost black; usually the cheek bones are prominent; in many cases the nose is concave and deep-rooted below prominent brow ridges, but a straight or convex nose is frequently seen. There is little prognathism. Many of the men and women are distinctly pleasant faced. Usually the hair is
[302] bleached with lime, and worn fairly short in well-combed frizzy mops. In the vicinity of Kandan I saw bald-headed old men wearing neatly made wigs of human hair twisted into short ringlets. There are many
[143] fair-haired people with brick-red skin who were said to have been born thus, and two or three cases of true albinism were found.

226 The coastal people fish with spears, nets and lines. In many places they go out into deep water in canoes, and catch sharks by the noose and rattle method that has been described before. Shark fishing expeditions are attended with considerable magical preparation. Representations of sharks appear in the carved portions of the canoe. Small fish for bait are caught secretly at night "so that sharks will not know what is threatening them." No one but the fisherman sees this going on. The operation involves certain sacrifices on the part of those engaged in it, such as food tabu, keeping away from women, &c. The expedition starts at break of dawn, before any one else is awake. The canoe men watch their opportunity and shoot out through the breakers. They make their way right out to sea looking for timber and drift wood washed out by the rains. Here small fish gather together in large numbers and attract the sharks. The rattles are sounded and the sharks thinking it is the noise made by sea birds

3: Chinnery G, E-5 (1929) 1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10

attacking shoals of fish come near to take their share. The canoe-men throw in their fish bait to lure the sharks within range of their loops of cane, and then they catch them, and after knocking them on the head haul them into the canoe. 226

Small gardens are made wherever fertile ground can be found, and in one or two places there are sago swamps where sago is cultivated and reserved for times of dry weather and food shortage. 241

In olden days trading was actively carried on between some of the coastal villages and Tabar. Nowadays the coastal and bush people barter with fish and taro, pigs, &c. 439

A shell money currency is used for trading and ceremonial purposes. It consists of smooth flat discs strung on fibre strands. At Kandan this is known as *levene*. One kind *levene da lolot*, a small red shell money, is made in the islands north of Kavieng and traded down the road; another *levene do liklik*, a small white shell money of lesser value, is made in the vicinity of Lemasong and Pinigindu. On the Lelet Plateau a different shell money *levene dasilok* occurs. It is of great value locally. Nothing was known of its origin, and there is relatively little of it left. When they showed it to me, I recognized it as the red shell money used in the D'Entrecasteaux group of Papua where it is known commonly as *sapi-sapi* and *bagi*. Similar shell money also occurs in the British Solomons. It probably found its way into the district during the "Blackbirding days" of olden times when many natives from this coast were recruited and taken to work on the cane-fields of Queensland. One or two of the survivors were met in the villages, still hale and hearty despite their age. 436 [171]

In this area there is still another kind of shell money *levene bungabung* made from white shell, the discs being larger than the other forms. The origin of this is also unknown.

The record of my enumeration of the population was handed to Mr. Charles H. Wickens, Commonwealth Government Statistician and Actuary, for consideration. His comments thereon are sub-joined— 128

The three tables which are appended have been compiled from investigations made by E. W. P. Chinery in the villages of the East coast of New Ireland, and provided a mass of data which might be profitably availed of by those wishing to make an intensive study of local conditions in New Guinea.

The first table is in respect of the components of population, and indicates by males and females the conjugal condition of adults, the number of children and adopted children and the number of village people who were absent at mission schools or at work outside the village.

The second table deals with the issue and survival of children of a number of unions in each village, and indicates the mortality of children during the lactation period (approximately two years after birth) and up to the time of the investigation, and number of children that were born per union and the number that survived per union. The mortality of first-born children is also shown.